

REMARKS

This Amendment is filed in response to the First RCE Office Action dated December 21, 2004, which has a shortened statutory period set to expire March 21, 2005. A two-month extension is requested, thereby extending the time of response to May 21, 2005.

Summary Of The Invention

Applicants' invention works on any phone and is applicable to any web site using existing web cookies. For example, referring to Fig. 1, a user can call a voice portal 110 (i.e. the first computer) using telephone 100 or cellular telephone 101. Voice portal 110 can use the telephone identifying information corresponding to the telephone (e.g. the ANI) to identify the profile for that user. Voice portal 110 can also select a state associated with that user's profile. Advantageously, the state comprises existing web cookies retrieved from other computers (e.g. a third party server). A user computer 102 can be used to create and/or build the user's profile.

In this manner, for example, a user could use her cell phone to call the voice portal to order a book from Amazon.com. Later, when the user logs onto her computer, she could access the web site of Amazon.com and check on the shipping of the book she ordered using the cell phone. In another example, a user could access the web site of Amazon.com and order a book. When the user calls the voice portal to access Amazon.com, the voice portal could query whether she would like to check on when her ordered book will arrive or perhaps query whether she would like to order another book similar to the one previously ordered.

In either example, cookies retrieved from Amazon.com as well as other web sites and stored by the voice portal as

associated with a user's profile allow the user to transact business or gather information over the telephone in an efficient, convenient, and secure manner. Specifically, a subset of the stored cookies can be selectively provided to the appropriate web sites when the user requests access. For example, if the user wishes to transact with Amazon.com, the voice portal can ensure that cookies from other web sites, such as barnesandnoble.com, are not sent. Thus, Applicants' recited method, apparatus, computer system, and computer program provide significant advantages in seamlessly integrating and maintaining the confidentiality of user information gathered using a standard telephone and the Internet. Notably, this integration and maintenance can be accomplished without requiring the user to have special hardware or software.

Applicants' Claims 1-19 Are Patentable Over Ball

Overview: Ball

Referring to Fig. 2 of Ball, a telephone/IP server 205 provides an interface between a PSTN 202 and an IP network 204. Col. 6, lines 14-17. An end user can place a call over PSTN 202 that terminates in telephone/IP server 205. Col. 5, lines 60-63. Telephone/IP server 205, using the number dialed by the end user, retrieves the URL of the web service requested. Col. 6, lines 17-25.

An interpreter 206, running on telephone/IP server 205, makes an HTTP request over IP network 204 to a web server 203 associated with that URL. Col. 6, lines 26-29. This HTTP request is a request for the web server's first PML (phone markup language) page, which is an interactive page requiring audio and/or touch-tone responses by the end user to one or more questions audibly presented to the end user. Col. 6, lines 26-

29 and 35-40. During the end user's interactive session in a first service with web server 203, web server 203 may generate a PML page that will result in the end user being transferred to a second service embodied on a web server 208 (or a second service within web server 203). Col. 7, lines 11-16. Specifically, associated with a question/statement of the PML page is a hyperlink to a URL address associated with the web server providing the second service. Col. 7, lines 24-29. If the end user audibly "clicks" on the hyperlink, then the first PML page of the second service is presented through telephone/IP server 205 to the end user, thereby enabling the end user to continue his interaction with the second service unaware that he is now being serviced through a different web server. Col. 7, lines 44-53.

In one embodiment, a cookie is used to transfer information from web server 203 (providing the first service) to telephone/IP server 205. The received cookie is stored by interpreter 206 and associated with the presently connected end user. Col. 9, lines 33-42. The cookie includes the originating domain name of the web server, an expiration date, and data items associated with the transaction running on the web server (e.g. the end user's name and PIN number, information regarding the end user's portfolio of stocks, or the end user's zip code). Col. 9, lines 44-54.

When the end user responds affirmatively to the transfer to the second service, telephone/IP server 205 generates an HTTP request to that URL and may include the information of the cookie in that request. Col. 9, lines 54-59. Conventionally, a cookie is only sent in the request if the domain name of the URL to which the HTTP request is directed is the same as the originating domain name of the cookie. Col. 9, lines 59-62. If the domain names differ, then interpreter 206 can be programmed

to send a cookie originating from one domain name to one of a predetermined and defined list of other domain names when an HTTP request is made to a URL whose domain name is on that list. Col. 10, lines 1-8.

Claims 1-19: Remarks

Applicants respectfully submit that Ball fails to teach the recited limitations in Claims 1-19 and their associated advantages.

Specifically, Claim 1, as amended, now recites:

selecting a state associated with the user profile using the voice application computer, the state comprising a plurality of cookies retrieved from other computers over a web interface and resulting from at least one telephone session, the voice application computer storing the user profile and the state associated with the user profile.

Applicants respectfully submit that Ball fails to teach these limitations. Ball teaches that after being notified that a service is being requested, a web server having an application sends a first PML page, i.e. an interactive page requiring audio and/or touch-tone responses by the end user to one or more questions audibly presented to the end user. Col. 6, lines 35-40. This PML page requests identification information of the end user, e.g. identity, PIN, or zipcode information. Col. 6, lines 40-46.

If telephone/IP server 205 stored the user profile and the state associated with the user profile (wherein the state includes a plurality of cookies resulting from at least one telephone session), then this first PML page would not be needed. Therefore, Applicants submit that server 205 cannot select a state, as recited in Claim 1.

Moreover, Claim 1 recites, "identifying a user profile over the telephone interface using the voice application computer and telephone identifying information". Applicants submit that Ball identifies the user profile using the first PML page, not the telephone identifying information.

Because Ball fails to disclose or suggest at least these limitations, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 1.

Claims 2-10 depend from Claim 1, and therefore are patentable for at least the reasons presented for Claim 1. Based on those reasons, Applicants also request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 2-10.

Moreover, Claim 2 recites, "wherein the automatically providing is based on a policy for a voice portal, and wherein the policy is dependent on needs of the application on the voice portal, first decisions made by at least one operator of the voice portal, and second decisions made by users of the voice portal". Ball teaches only that the telephone/IP server can be programmed to send a cookie originating from one domain name to one of a predetermined and defined list of other domain names when an HTTP request is made to a URL whose domain name is on that list. Col. 10, lines 3-8. Therefore, Applicants request further reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 2.

Claim 11, as amended, now recites:

means for receiving telephone identifying information over the telephone interface;

means for identifying the user profile according to the telephone identifying information;

means for selecting a state associated with the user profile, the state comprising a plurality of cookies retrieved from other computers over a web interface and resulting from at least one telephone session; [and]

means for storing the user profile and the state associated with the user profile.

Therefore, Claim 11 is patentable for substantially the same reasons presented for Claim 1. Based on those reasons, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 11.

Claims 12-13 depend from Claim 11, and therefore are patentable for at least the reasons presented for Claim 11. Based on those reasons, Applicants also request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 12-13.

Claim 14, as amended, now recites:

wherein the state comprises a plurality of cookies retrieved from other computer systems via the web interface, generated based on at least one telephone session, and stored in the computer system.

Therefore, Claim 14 is also patentable for substantially the same reasons presented for Claim 1. Based on those reasons, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 14.

Claim 15 recites:

a third set of instructions for selecting a state associated with the user profile, the state comprising a plurality of cookies retrieved from other computers over a web interface and resulting from at least one telephone session;

a fourth set of instructions for storing the user profile and the state associated with the user profile.

Therefore, Claim 15 is also patentable for substantially the same reasons presented for Claim 1. Based on those reasons, Applicants request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 15.

Claims 16-19 depend from Claim 15, and therefore are patentable for at least the reasons presented for Claim 15. Based on those reasons, Applicants also request reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claims 16-19.

Moreover, Claim 16 recites, "wherein the providing is based on a policy for a voice portal, and wherein the policy is dependent on needs of the application on the voice portal, first decisions made by at least one operator of the voice portal, and second decisions made by users of the voice portal". As noted above with respect to Claim 2, Ball teaches only that the telephone/IP server can be programmed to send a cookie originating from one domain name to one of a predetermined and defined list of other domain names when an HTTP request is made to a URL whose domain name is on that list. Col. 10, lines 3-8. Therefore, Applicants also request further reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 16.

Moreover, Claim 18 recites, "wherein the second set of instruction further comprises a set of instructions for creating a new user profile responsive to receiving telephone identifying information not associated with an existing user profile". Because Ball fails to disclose or suggest the recited telephone identifying information, Ball must logically fail to disclose or suggest creating a new user profile responsive to receiving telephone identifying information not associated with an existing user profile. Applicants respectfully submit that the passage of Ball cited in the Office Action, i.e. col. 4, line 65 to col. 5, line 47, does not teach this limitation. Therefore, Applicants request further reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 18.

Moreover, Claim 19 recites, "wherein the second set of instruction further comprises a set of instructions for creating a temporary user profile responsive to receiving telephone

identifying information not associated with an existing user profile and wherein the computer program further comprises a sixth set of instructions for deleting the temporary user profile upon receiving a signal from the telephone interface signaling an end of a telephone call". Applicants respectfully submit that the passage of Ball cited in the Office Action, i.e. col. 9, line 33 to col. 10, line 15, does not teach this limitation. Therefore, Applicants request further reconsideration and withdrawal of the rejection of Claim 19.

New Claim 20

Applicants' new Claim 20 recites:

providing a database accessible via the voice portal, the database storing a plurality of state items, each of the state items associated with a user identity and an application.

Therefore, Claim 20 is also patentable for substantially the same reasons presented for Claim 1. Based on those reasons, Applicants submit that Claim 20 is patentable over Ball.

CONCLUSION

Claims 1-20 are pending in the present Application.  
Allowance of these claims is respectfully requested.

If there are any questions, please telephone the  
undersigned at 408-451-5907 to expedite prosecution of this  
case.

Respectfully submitted,

  
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